

CITY OF NORTHAMPTON

MASSACHUSETTS

In City Council,

February 7, 2013

Upon the recommendation of City Council President William H.
Dwight and Councilor Owen Freeman-Daniels

Resolution Regarding Hate Crimes

Over the weekend, a man was assaulted on Strong Avenue here in Northampton with terrifying ferocity. He was struck in the face with a viciousness that no decent person can comprehend. The blows continued even after he lost consciousness.

The police are investigating and there are few details available to make any determination regarding the motive for this crime.

There have been concerns and speculation expressed within the community that this attack was a hate crime because the victim is a gay man who was leaving an event at a bar on Strong Avenue that was advertised as gay friendly. It is important to emphasize that no determination has been made regarding motive and the investigation into the assault is in its earliest stages. It is premature for any official to say otherwise.

That said, regardless of the outcome of this specific episode it is appropriate and imperative now that we assert in the most emphatic way our abhorrence for crimes motivated by bigotry.

A hate crime when it occurs is an affront to ethos of this community. It is an assault that injures the victim, but more than that... it is an assault on the members of the group that is being targeted and by extension...an assault on the entire community.

All crimes that leave victims are considered by us to be repugnant. In hate crimes there is the added element of an expressed contempt for the virtues we cherish, thus amplifying the offense.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,

On behalf of the City Council, Mayor Narkewicz, the Chief of Police Russell Sienkiewicz, his personnel and the citizens of Northampton, the Northampton City Council emphatically declares that the City of Northampton will not abide attacks, be they verbal, psychic or physical, on any person because of who they are or who they are presumed to be. Anyone who commits a hate crime in Northampton must know that they have no sanctuary here.